

Wanderers Marksmen Swamp Abingdon

BY 'NOVA'

Wycombe Wanderers 9, Abingdon Town 0

THE difference in standard between Isthmian and Hellenic League football was exposed by Wycombe Wanderers on Saturday when they shattered hapless Abingdon Town and shot their way into the semi-finals of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup competition.

Poor Abingdon, seven goals down at half-time, offered little resistance to an almost full-strength Wanderers side other than their pluck. But pluck alone is not enough to stop hot-shot marksmen like Peter Lowen and John Balson, who cracked in four goals apiece as Wycombe strolled to their biggest win for years.

Abingdon contributed to their own defeat, however, by using the wrong tactics against the far more individually skilful Wanderers. Instead of using the normal tearaway "underdog" tactics of fierce tackling and hard running, they attempted to win by short passing. At Loakes Park they were asking for trouble!

For within five minutes Balson had opened a scoring-spree which led to a somewhat dreary, one-way procession.

PATRICK BACK

Abingdon managed to hold out for 11 more minutes but then Lowen first-timed a Horseman flick into the net. The visitors made one serious break but Patrick, back in the senior side after a seven-match absence, showed all his old agility and fearlessness in diving at the feet of the on-rushing Thomas.

Then the Wanderers forwards took control and Horseman, who did everything but score, and Hodges, laid on chance after chance for the double-spearhead of Lowen and Balson. Both responded excitedly, scoring goals which would have been good against any opposition, with the centre-forward hitting four and Balson completing a hat-trick.

Ten minutes after the interval Balson notched his fourth and a quarter-of-an-hour later Brian French, making a quiet senior debut on the right-wing in the place of Worley—who was out with an injured knee—crept into the scoring act by coolly tapping home number nine.

UNHAPPY RETURN

With 20 minutes still left a double-figure win seemed certain, but much desperate defensive play and some understandably half-hearted home attacks allowed the visitors to retain at least a little of their dignity.

This overwhelming victory, which meant an unhappy return to Loakes Park for old favourites Peter James and Ray Butler, did little but improve the Wanderers' goal average for the season.

Yet even in this massacre one thing showed through — that neither Alistair Lewis nor George Maharg had the ability to control the midfield play. Neither made real use of the space or time they were allowed and Beck and Pullin were often more constructive. But perhaps this is the plan, and the one which will surprise Spennymoor!

Wycombe.—P. Patrick; J. Beck, G. Pullin; G. Maharg, P. Roystone, A. Lewis; B. French, T. Horseman, P. Lowen, J. Balson, P. Hodges.

Abingdon.—J. Allen; B. Weston, K. Winter; H. Nathan, D. Cooper, K. Rowlands; N. Thomas, R. Butler, P. James, M. Fleming, F. Buck.